4.5 AESTHETICS

This section describes the aesthetic resources in the vicinity of the El Segundo Marine Terminal and the potential impacts of the El Segundo Marine Terminal Lease Renewal Project (Project) and alternatives. Descriptions of existing visual characteristics are presented and potential Project-related impacts to aesthetic and visual resources, such as increased light and glare and impacts to scenic views, are evaluated using analyses of photographs, site reconnaissance, and Project data.

Future conditions evaluated in this section are based on continued operations of the Marine Terminal. Using data from Chevron's application, it is estimated that throughput may increase from present levels by one percent annually over the lease term, although actual values may vary from year to year. In the history of the Marine Terminal, throughput levels have varied depending on ship volume capacity and market demand for petroleum products.

Data used for this section were obtained from various sources, including site photographs. Information has been used when appropriate from previous documents, including the Final Environmental Impact Report Submitted for the Exercise of Option to Renew a Lease of State Lands for the Chevron Marine Terminal at El Segundo, Los Angeles County for the previous lease (CSLC 1996).

4.5.1 Environmental Setting

Regional Characteristics

The Marine Terminal is adjacent to the Chevron Products Company (Chevron) petroleum Refinery on parcels of tidal and submerged land in the city of El Segundo in Los Angeles County. The Marine Terminal and Refinery have been at this location since 1911. The Marine Terminal facilities are located along the beach and within the Santa Monica Bay. Low rolling hills along the eastern edge of the Bay surround the site. The Santa Monica and San Gabriel Mountains are visible to the north and east, with the Palos Verdes Peninsula and Hills visible to the south. The Marine Terminal is south of Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and west of the San Diego Freeway (Interstate-405).

The characteristics of the Santa Monica Bay shoreline include a range of visual resources typical of urbanized and industrial areas along coastal beaches. The city of El Segundo is a heavily industrialized area. The site is bordered by three main roads:

Vista del Mar to the east, Grand Avenue to the north, and 45th Street along the south. The surrounding onshore land uses near the Terminal include:

- North: Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Scattergood Plant, Hyperion Wastewater Treatment Plant, and commercial and residential areas of El Segundo;
- South: the El Segundo Power Generating Station, which lies adjacent to the beach, and the El Porto residential community, a neighborhood within the city of Manhattan Beach;
- East: a commercial and light industrial corridor and the Chevron El Segundo Refinery; and
- West: the El Segundo public beach along the Pacific Ocean and associated bike path.

Site-Specific Characteristics

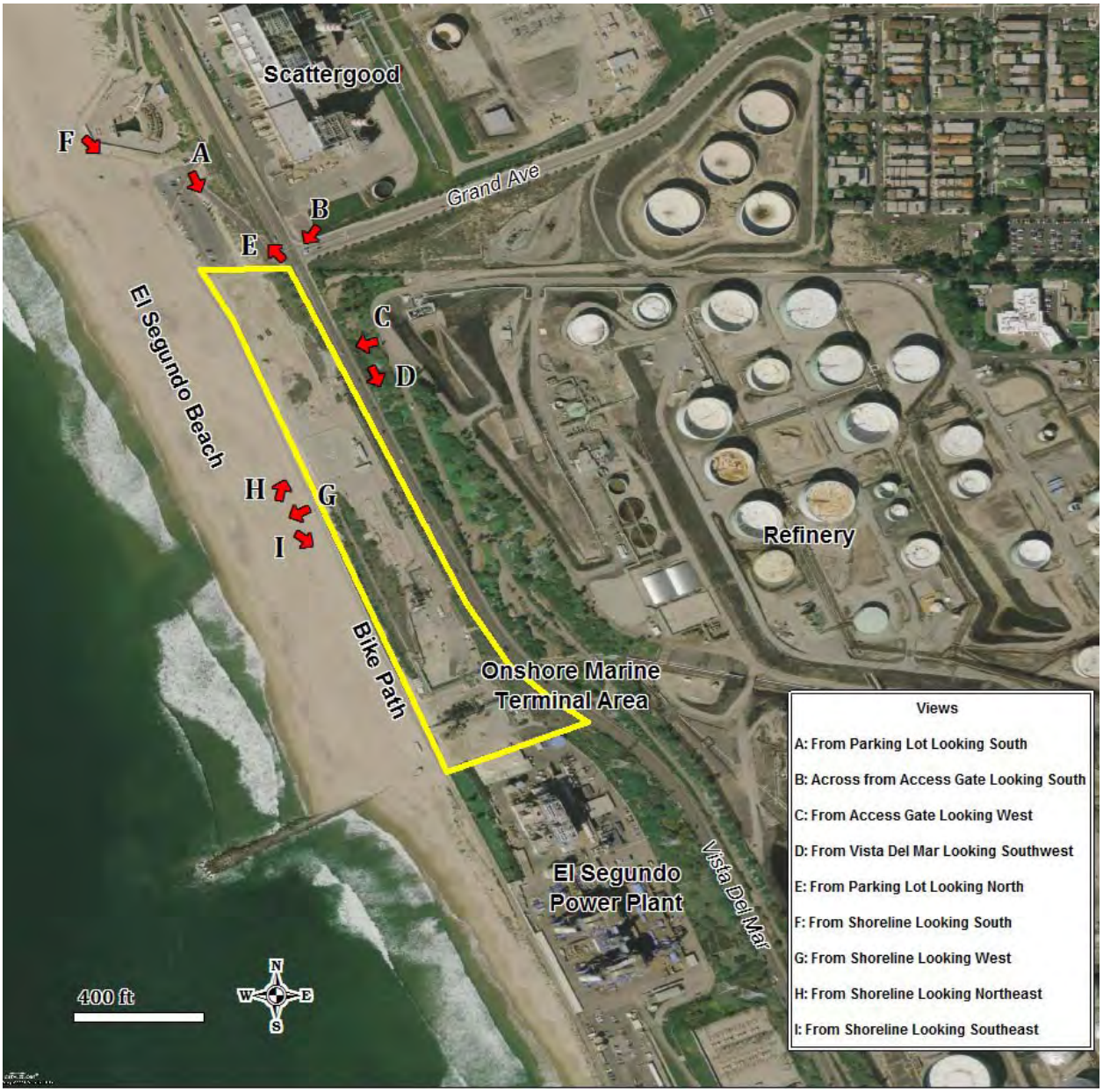
The analysis of visual impacts focuses on the nature and magnitude of changes to the visual character of El Segundo Beach and surrounding areas as a result of the proposed Project. A visit to the Project site, El Segundo Beach, and surrounding areas on November 19, 2008, allowed for the following analysis:

- Existing structures and components and their visual quality, including location, height, massing, footprint, and any other relevant site development information that is available from Chevron, California State Lands Commission (CSLC), or the city of El Segundo uses;
- Ambient and spot lighting levels attributable to site, signage, and building illumination;
- Views of the site as described in previous analyses; and
- Visual relationships to adjacent uses.

Figure 4.5-1 presents the key photographic viewpoints of the Marine Terminal used for this analysis.

Private facilities immediately surrounding the Marine Terminal include the 3.8-acre (1.5-hectare) Chevron fitness center facility, the Old Town Music Hall, and the Seiko Tennis Court.

Figure 4.5-1
View Corridors Key Map



Offshore Facilities

The two active berths at Marine Terminal, Berth 3 and Berth 4, are approximately 1.4 miles (2.25 kilometers [km]) and approximately 1.5 miles (2.41 km) offshore, respectively. Each berth is surrounded by a seven-buoy mooring that circle around a

vessel to hold it in a fixed position, and also several submerged hose strings and pipelines. Due to their size and distance from the shore, views of the buoys are limited from the closest land use, the beach.

The most visible aspect of the offshore facilities is vessels arriving at the berths. Vessels are classified by the type of cargo they carry; their size is expressed in dead weight tons (DWT). Due varying standards among various classification societies, size range for the different vessel types will vary. Vessels visiting Berth 3 vary in size from 8,000 to 123,000 DWT, while vessels visiting Berth 4 range from 35,000 to 188,000 DWT. The standard size of an ocean-going crude oil tanker vessel is 80,000 to 119,000 DWT, according to the Average Freight Rate Assessment tanker rating system. The length of vessels ranges from 272 feet (82.9 meters [m]) to approximately 1,000 feet (304.8 m), with an average of approximately 950 feet (289.56 m); the average width of vessels is approximately 100 feet (30.48 m); and the depth of vessels average 39.5 feet (12.04 m).

During 2006, 347 vessels moored at the Marine Terminal's berths for an average berth time of 20.3 hours. In addition, tankers moor at the Federal anchorages approximately 3.5 miles (5.63 km) offshore in Federal waters. Onshore views of tankers moored at the berths or at the Federal anchorages vary depending on location

- Most residential areas to the north and east of the onshore Marine Terminal area do not have direct views of the ocean (and therefore the berths or anchorages) because of terrain and the industrial facilities immediately along the coast (the Scattergood power plant, Hyperion, and LAX).

- Residential areas to the south of the Marine Terminal in El Porto and Manhattan Beach have direct views of the ocean and the berth and anchorage areas.

- The views from Dockweiler Beach State Park to the north, the beach along the coast of the city of Manhattan Beach to the south, and El Segundo Beach include tankers at the moorings and the Federal anchorages (see Figure 4.5-8, Viewshed G).

In 2006, vessels at a single berth were visible 49 percent of the time and at both berths 18 percent of the time. In 2006, a vessel was located at the Federal anchorages 25 percent of the time.

Onshore Facilities

Onshore Marine Terminal facilities include a control house, three berth pump stations, two substations, a helicopter landing pad, and two oil spill command trailers on a nine-acre (0.036 square km) parcel of Chevron-owned land starting at Vista del Mar and extending 200 feet (61.0 m) towards the shore. With the exception of limited obstructed views from Vista del Mar, the onshore Marine Terminal facilities are generally screened from public view due to the location of the Refinery and its effective use of berms and landscaping. This includes a cyclone fence overgrown with plant materials that borders the site along Vista del Mar. Thus, the facility is generally hidden from the sight of passersby traveling south along Vista del Mar Boulevard.

The structures are completely hidden from the view of passersby traveling north along Vista del Mar. The onshore facilities do not obstruct ocean views from Vista del Mar, due to the lower elevation of the onshore Marine Terminal (see Figure 4.5-4, Viewshed C). Views of the onshore structures from the Refinery and surrounding areas are minimal because they are located below several levels of landscaped slopes.

From residential areas, the views of the Refinery are a barrier to views of the onshore Marine Terminal facilities. Unlike the adjacent Refinery and its predominant stacks, towers, and columns, the onshore Marine Terminal facilities are not a unique visual element. Rather, the low-scale visual features of the facilities are a less prominent industrial presence than the adjacent uses and area (see Figures 4.5-7, Viewshed F, and 4.5-8, Viewshed G).

Passersby traveling south on Vista del Mar pass a turnout to the east with views of the Marine Terminal command trailers and helicopter landing pad with the El Segundo Power Generating Facility farther south (see Figure 4.5-7, Viewshed F).

The view of the onshore Marine Terminal from El Segundo Beach is partially obstructed by a chain link fence covered with green materials in order to further obstruct the view (see Figures 4.5-7, Viewshed F, and 4.5-8, Viewshed G). However, the views of the onshore Marine Terminal facilities are clearly visible from El Segundo Beach and the bike path.

Figure 4.5-2
Viewshed A: View from the Parking Lot North of Marine Terminal, Looking South

Figure 4.5-3
Viewshed B: View from Grand Avenue Across from Marine Terminal Access Gate, Looking South

Figure 4.5-4
Viewshed C: View from Vista Del Mar Across from Marine Terminal Access Gate, Looking West